

FIRST SOVIET EXPERIMENT

nulla Khan, always an extremist, who was perturbed by the religious fervor of his colleague and chief, interrupted his meditations and advised him to "forget religion" if he wanted to be on friendly terms with the Bolsheviks. Eventually Kuchik Khan met Raskolnikov, commander of the Soviet troops that disembarked at Enzeli. Forcing the British to withdraw, the Red forces promptly occupied Resht, while Soviet political agents concentrated their attention on Kuchik Khan and his movement. Without much delay a meeting took place in Resht, during which the Soviet Republic of Gilan was proclaimed. Kuchik dispatched a telegram to Lenin in which he expressed his faith in Soviet-Iranian friendship and the "ideal system of the Third International." "•

In addition to Kuchik and Ekhsanulla, the new Soviet had as prominent leaders Khalu Qurban and Hasan Khan. Raskolnikov brought in Ja'afar Pishevari to take charge of the Gilan Commissariat of Interior. The old Tabriz revolutionary, Haidar Khan, also joined the

11 The text of the telegram, as quoted by Abikh, was as follows:
"To Comrade Lenin, R.S.F.S.R.

"We greet you and all your comrades at the time of your brilliant successes achieved against the enemies of socialism. We, Persian revolutionaries, have for a long time cherished the same hope, fighting against the evil and the hated English and Persian oppressors. Now is fulfilled the long-expected and happy act of the formation of the Persian Socialist Soviet Republic, which we proclaim before all the world. We consider it to be our duty to draw your attention to the fact that there are a number of criminals on Persian territory: Persian oppressors, English traders, and diplomats supported by English troops. As long as these enemies of the Persian people are in Persia, they will prove to be an obstacle to the introduction of our just system all over our country. In the name of humanity and the equality of all nations the Persian Socialist Soviet Republic asks you and all the socialists belonging to the Third International for

help in liberat-
 ing us and all weak and oppressed nations from the yoke of
 Persian and English
 oppressors. Bearing in mind the establishment of brotherly union
 and full unanim-
 ity between us, we expect from the free Russian nation the
 assistance that may
 prove indispensable for the stabilization of the Persian Socialist
 Soviet Republic.
 Mindful that all nations liberated from the yoke of capitalism
 should be united
 into one brotherly union, we request you to include in this
 union the hearts of
 the Persian nation, liberated from a centuries-long yoke, so that
 our holy revolu-
 tion may be fulfilled till the end.
 "We have a firm faith that all the world will be governed by
 one ideal system
 of the Third International.
 "Representative of the Persian Socialist Soviet Republic
 proclaimed in the
 city of Resht: Mirza Kuchik."